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TALES.

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THE THANKLESS OFFICE,

Or, Look before you Leap.

BY MRS. L. A. BROCKSBANK.

SCENE I.

"AND so you are going to marry a widower after all!" exclaimed Kate Carson, as she drew on her glove with a sudden jerk that occasioned a sad rent in the delicate fabric—"tell me, Alice—is it true? For I cannot believe it from other lips than your own."

"Does it then, appear so very incredible?" enquired her friend, laughing.

"Indeed!—it does—after listening to all your protestations to the contrary. Alice have you forgotten our 'creed' of *auld Lang Syne*?"

"Oh! those school-days have passed away, and with them many of my childish aversions, and foolish prejudices, but, tell me Kate—have you seen him?—Mr. Belding, I mean?"

"Ah! Alice,—it is true, then;—else why that blush at the mention of his name?—no. I have not, seen,—but I have heard something of him."

"Nothing to his disadvantage, I imagine," replied Alice, quite confidently, tell me what you believe him to be, from report, and I will tell you what he is in truth."

"What he is in love—you mean, oh! Alice? well—he is just twice your age."

"He is just thirty three."

"And you, just seventeen, why Alice, he will box your ears if you are saucy to him, depend on it."

"Ha! I would like to see the man who would dare to do it—he would soon find sufficient employment, in defending his own ears, I imagine—but go on Kate."

"He is grave,—stern—and overbearing."

The spirit beamed brightly from the dark eyes of Alice, as she replied,—"I'll hear no more,—'tis slander all—pray, have I not eyes, as well as my neighbors?"

"No Alice, Love is blind."

"Ha! so they would have us believe. Now hear me Kate—suppose I should marry one, three or four years older than myself—I should have a mere school-boy for a husband. Add two or three years to that, and he would be—what was still worse, a 'b'hoy.' Now I prefer a man who has arrived at years of discretion, for believe me Kate, it is easier

for a gay lass to check her own bounding footsteps, than to restrain those of a reckless young husband."

"True, Alice, but—"

"Hear me out before adding any 'buts,' Mr. Belding is sedate, or grave as you affirm—but consider, Kate, in a husband, we seek a companion for life—not a mere partner for the ball room; a fancy article, got up for the occasion—a composition of white kid, moustache, and perfume, with his wealth on his back, impudence in his face, and his pockets lined with cigars, and tailor's bills, and as to his being stern, &c. I flatter myself that I am blessed with optics of my own, and I am not bound to believe all 'Madam Rumor's reports.'"

"In that case, we should have a long creed, I fancy—but again, you have always protested, that you would never marry a man who was not decidedly handsome."

"Nonsense! Kate. Show me a handsome man (and they are not so frequent as milestones—except in novels) and I will show you a vain one.—I could endure to have my mirrors cracked by my husband's face, but I would not have him in love with his own pretty self. No, no—if a man must be vain, let him be vain of his wife. Mr. Belding has an intelligent, agreeable countenance, and that in my opinion at least, constitutes manly beauty."

"Well, answered Alice—but it is said that he still cherishes a fond remembrance of his departed wife—that her portrait is suspended in the parlor, and he is never known to look upon it without a tear or a sigh and he makes an idol of his little Eva, because she has her mother's blue eyes and chestnut curls."

"And would you, Kate, esteem a man the more, could he forget in one short year the loved companion of his bosom, the mother of his little ones?"

"And welcome another to his heart and home."

The color deepened on Alice's cheeks as she replied. "His situation might excuse his early marriage—he has, you are aware, three little motherless children."

"Now then, you have arrived at the point, the fact of his having children would be a suffice reason for consideration—the office of a step-mother, is, I imagine no sinecure—were he as rich as Croesus, and a very angel of perfection I would not accept his hand."

Why, Kate you astonish me! three sweeter little ones your eyes never beheld. Emma the eldest, is eight years of age, and appears to be

endowed with the wisdom and discretion of many of twice her years. Think of the company and assistance, one might naturally expect from such a child. Then, there is Alouzo—a little black-eyed miniature of his father—full of fun and mischief, and "angel Eva" as he calls the youngest, is a perfect cherub of eighteen months old—said to be the image of a mother whose loss she can never realize; and let me ask what could the man do with those three helpless children, unless he could induce another to supply the place of her who is forever lost to them.

"I was informed that a maiden sister, who has resided in his family for some years—now superintends his domestic concerns, and takes a tender interest in his children. Surely he is not impelled by necessity to take a second wife."

"True, but a widowed life must be sad and lonely—there is doubtless a void in his heart and home, that a sister's presence could never fill."

"Undoubtedly; Alice—do you remember the white rose tree that was cleft by the storm—leaving one half of the main stalk to support alone the weight of buds and flowers? and how we planted another by its side and bound the two together with twigs and grass?"

"Yes—and the branches soon twined together strengthening and beautifying each other. No one would have supposed them to have been separate trees."

"Until the young tree blossomed—then, every eye marked the contrast, for the flowers were of a deep red, while the broken tree bore roses of the purest white."

"Indeed! we did not think as far as that. Are they still living?"

"Yes—but the frail bands that united them soon became weakened by the winds and the sun, and they are now separate trees though they are blooming side by side."

"Ah!—I comprehend you—and a strange girl you are too. You have a way of saying just what you think—while it is impossible to get angry with you. You deserve a good husband but an "old maid you will live, and an old maid you will die," for you have too much wisdom and discernment to take up with any mortal man, and the "lords of creation" fallen as they are from their high estates, will scarce venture to submit their characters to your searching eye, hoping to be found immaculate."

"I have no more wisdom than I find a constant use for—replied Kate laughing, "nor do I intend

to remain an old maid—though it is possible I may do worse as many have done before me; you know Harry Beaumont."

"Yes," now, do not open your eyes so wide I have nothing very strange to communicate—I only called to solicit your attendance on next Sunday week—as bridesmaid."

"I am dumb with astonishment!—when?—where?—and how?—has all this been suffered to progress without the aid of "Madame Rumor," or has she been so busy with my affairs as to leave yours wholly unattended to? But, Kate, you too, must have forgotten our "creed of old lang syne" as you call it, when we mutually pledged ourselves with sincerity worthy of a better resolution, never to marry a "widower, a dandy or a poor man," now Henry Beaumont has a widowed mother and little sister to support, and all by his own exertions—where is your wisdom and prudence after all?"

"Henry has health, an unblemished character, and he is moreover, rich in the heart's treasures—not for California's mines would I exchange his love, no Alice, I have not broken my pledge."

"Well—you must acknowledge that the mother and sister are an offset to the widower's children."

"I cannot—indeed I have neither mother nor sister of my own and in his dear connections I shall find both. And now I must solicit your pardon if I have said too much. I love you as a dear sister, and sincerely wish you every happiness in your meditated union. Still—still, I fear that however bright may appear the foreground of the picture, dark clouds will gather in the distance, and that you will find the position of step-mother a thankless office." "Good morning, Alice."

"Good morning."

SCENE II.

Mr. Belding and his hopeful and happy bride had just returned from their wedding tour; and surely, if peace and happiness were to be found on earth they might be supposed to dwell within the precincts of the mansion prepared for the reception of the young and lovely bride. Every thing appeared in perfect order; neatness, elegance and taste reigned throughout the entire establishment, while from the stillness and quietness that existed, one might imagine that some secret and unseen power presided over the whole. No frizzle-headed domestics were seen, peeping in at the half open doors, or heard whispering in low Irish under the windows: no ebony shoe-blacks, or ragged errand boys were seen swinging upon the gates, all eager with open mouth to get a glimpse of their new "misses."

Aunt Mabel, Mr. Belding's maiden sister was a true specimen of the quaker sisterhood—reserved, calm and dignified—precise to a fault and a lady withal in the true sense of the word. By her the young wife was welcomed with every token of respect and deference due to the position of a newly installed mistress of the mansion. The young wife was reclining upon a splendid lounge, in a revery of bliss, (if I may use the term) when her husband entered the room accompanied by his "little trio," as he termed his children who were formerly introduced to their "new mamma." Emma, the eldest, was a dainty little miss with very bright eyes and long dark ringlets, and a sweet saucy mouth at once tempting and scornful—and

the way in which she presented the tips of her tiny fingers to her new mamma was "a caution." Mrs. Belding smiled sweetly upon the little lady and solicited a kiss, which with evident reluctance was given, while at the same time her eyes were fixed upon the portrait of her own dead mamma with a sad and thoughtful gaze."

"This lady is your mamma—" said Mr. Belding, as he drew little Alonzo, to her side "would you not like to give her a kiss?" The child drew back and gazed wistfully into its father's face as if he had detected a falsehood upon his lips and in sweet lisping accents replied

"My dear mamma is dead; do't you know papa? they dressed her in a white robe, and put pale flowers in her hands—and she looked—Oh so very beautiful!—and then they laid her in a deep dark grave, and you told me I should never see my poor mamma again in this world, that she would never, never return to love me any more—but that if I would be very good we would one day go to her, away in the beautiful heaven, where the good and the happy live, and where we should never have to die again. Do't you remember now papa? The child fixed his earnest, tearful eyes upon his father's face, and it was some moments before he could form or utter a reply.

"Yes, Alonzo—your mamma your own mamma, is dead. She is happy now in heaven, and we would not, if we could, have her return again to this world of sorrow and death."

"Oh! yes—if I could bring her back, papa—Oh! if I could!"

But that cannot be, my son, this lady will now be your mamma—she will be kind to you, and love you, if you are a good child—as your own mamma did when she lived."

"Aunt Mabel is kind to me, and loves me too, but I have no dear mamma, any more."

The child drew back to the side of his aunt, who drew a deep sigh, as she pressed his little hand tenderly in her own. Mr. Belding also sighed, as he placed the smiling Eva in the arms of his young wife, and left the room. Aunt Mabel soon followed with Alonzo by her side, and as Miss Emma seemed little inclined to make her acquaintance, the step-mother soon found herself alone with the little Eva, who peeped timidly into her face, and played with her curls, with the sweet confidence of artless infancy.

"You, at least, may learn to love me," sighed the lady as she pressed the little one to her bosom, and imprinted a warm kiss upon her rosy lips.—Raising the child in her arms she now ventured for the first time, to look at the portrait of the former Mrs. Belding. No sooner had she removed the golden tissue which veiled the picture, than the child extended her dimpled arms, and lisped "dear mamma"—the only words it had yet learned to speak.

"I am one too many, here, I can perceive," sighed the young wife as Eva slid from her arms and glided from the room. The hot tears rushed to her eyes, in spite of her efforts to repress them: and it was in vain that she strove to rally her spirits, and appear blithe and happy as before.

Notwithstanding the display of wealth, and the luxury by which she was surrounded; notwithstanding the devotion of a worthy husband whom she fondly, and truly loved; and the beauty of the interesting children—whom she had learned to

regard with almost maternal tenderness and affection; a sadness—a dark forboding of the future, cast a shadow over her spirits, which she could neither account for, nor subdue; and which the mournful expression of the deep blue eyes that looked down upon her from the gilded frame, did not tend to remove.

"How foolish I am,"—she murmured as she replaced the curtain over the portrait, "I must overcome this weak sensibility, at once, or I am lost to earthly happiness. I must gain the love of these children, if it is possible to do so—for it is plainly to be perceived that they are little less than "household goods." "In truth I believe I could love them a little more, if their father loved them a little less; I almost wish he had no child—peba! what is the use of wishing?—I half fear friend Kate's prediction will be verified, after all."

The following morning Aunt Mabel, expressed her determination of visiting a friend, who resided in a distant town—probably inferring that her presence would be no longer desirable, but she added with her usual politeness.

"Possibly the superintendence of family affairs, may prove somewhat tedious, or irksome, at first—if so, I will, with pleasure defer my visit for the present, and endeavor to render some assistance to Mrs. Belding."

"Of this, her brother signified his approval, but Mrs. Belding rather hastily replied, "Oh! not at all—I am obliged to you, certainly but not on any account defer your visit for that reason."

The truth was she stood in awe of the stately quakeress, and was not particularly desirous that she should be witness to her first attempts at house-keeping, for like most young ladies who have received their education at a fashionable boarding schools, she had imbibed a prejudice against domestic employments, particularly those most likely to soil the hands or injure the delicacy of the complexion. Not that she considered it so very important that her hands should retain their pearly hue now, that her "market was made," though she still deemed it unlady like to be seen in the kitchen, employed in the vulgar task of making cakes, and pies—and what—pray, are servants intended for, if ladies must be their own kitchen maids? And here, in particular, the domestics appeared to be so orderly, and well trained that everything would doubtless go on like clock work, so that aunt Mabel would be at least, a supernumerary in the household—not that she wished to get rid of the good lady—oh! no, certainly not.

Aunt Mabel sighed as she gave Emma the parting embrace and when little Eva, who was tottling about with her white kitten pressed, to her bosom, suddenly released her captive, and and put up her cherry mouth for a kiss, the tears followed unrestrained.

As for master Alonzo, he was found mounted upon the driver's seat, whip in hand, ready for an immediate departure; and no persuasions could induce him to come down, and bid aunt Mabel "good-by." "She was going away, and so was he, of course—he would return with her, but stay behind!—not he."

"Who will play with Eva while you are away?" enquired his father.

"Emma—and she may have my pony, and rocking-horse, too."

"I must go to school," replied Emma, "I cannot stay at home to play." Mrs. Belding did not feel quite pleased to see the children so eager to leave home—she felt that she was the cause, and she thought rightly, but with one of her most winning smiles she extended her hand, and endeavored to persuade Alonzo to stay with her.

"Stay with your mamma, dear," said Aunt Mabel, and when I return I will bring you a beautiful book of prints."

"My mamma is dead—you know it, aunt Mabel, did we not read her name on the white stone, and put flowers upon her grave, last Sunday? shall I go alone and stay by her, while you are gone, aunt Mabel?"

Mrs. Belding withdrew from the door, and Mr. Belding lifted Alonzo from the carriage, which drove away to the great displeasure of the sobbing child. His father did not send him into the house with an angry word and a frown, as might have been expected, but took him in his arms and carried him to the store.

"He is ruining that boy with indulgence," exclaimed Mrs. Belding, as she took the struggling kitten from Eva's arms and set it at liberty in the garden. "I do not like to see children play with cats," she said upon seeing Emma's look of displeasure, "the poor dumb creatures are sensible to pain, as well as ourselves."

Emma's dark eyes flashed, as she caught Eva in her arms and carried her into the garden. She had ever been accustomed to obedience and she knew that it would not be right to reply, but a bold spirit was manifest, and Mrs. Belding marked it well.

It would be difficult to describe her feelings as she retired to her own chamber after the departure of aunt Mabel.

She felt that she was alone—none could understand her position, none could sympathize with her. She was determined to do her best but *what*, would be for the best? there was the difficulty. She began to foresee as Kate had predicted, "dark clouds" gathering in the distance.

The very qualities that she had formerly admired in Emma, now appeared like faults. Her quick eye—energy of disposition and proud, independent spirit would doubtless prove so many weapons arrayed against herself—most certainly they would if she failed to win her love and confidence, and this she already despaired of doing. In truth the children did not now appear so very lovely, and engaging as she once believed though little Eva, was certainly a very sweet child, notwithstanding she had lisped "dear mamma," when looking at her mother's picture. She might succeed in gaining her love, but then, Emma would doubtless be so watchful and suspicious—and besides, their father quite spoils the whole of them, and as for aunt Mabel—she was past endurance—so stately, so distant and precise—so very tender of the children! Oh! dear—but then, on the other hand her husband was very kind, he had surrounded her with every thing that heart could desire, and surely it was her duty to be happy.

One thing was wanting to make her so, and that was *sympathy*. Some dear—true friend to consult on all occasions of perplexity and doubt. Her husband was the proper person, but he believed his children nearly perfect, and he would only reproach her, in his heart, at least if she ventured to express

her own opinion on the subject. Dear to a fond father's heart, is his little motherless flock—every one pities them, and hopes, their step-mother will be kind to them, and yet, they doubt it—for who, pray, ever heard of a kind step-mother? At all events the kind neighbors who live "right opposite" are duly commissioned, by general consent, to keep a "good look out." Some pity the deluded father, and many blame him for marrying that particular person—why, if he had only taken the trouble to ask their advice, they could have made a far better selection from among the myriads of "spinsters" who would all have married him if his house could have contained them.

They all sympathize with the poor unfortunate children, and tell the eldest, (in confidence of course) that she must take care of her little brothers and sisters, and be sure to tell her father if the cruel step-mother imposes any tasks upon them, or scolds, or makes any presents to her friends, for now, that she has married into such a fortune, she will be sure to contribute to the support of all her poor relations. "So keep an eye upon her, all of you."

A light tap at the door aroused Mrs. Belding from these melancholy reflections, and before she had time to remove the traces of unbidden tears. Letty, the kitchen maid presented herself before her.

"Pardon me for disturbing you, ma'am, but I have had the oven heated this half hour, and I thought, may be, it was time the turkey was baking."

Now if the girl had said that the earth had opened, and swallowed, oven, turkey, and all—the lady would not have been more surprised, for what had she—pray, to do with the baking of a turkey!

"Very well, Letty; I suppose you can put a fowl into the oven, without my superintendence?"

"Troth, ma'am, and so I can, indeed, when it is ready; but I thought may be you would be after stuffing it first—or may be I shall bake it as it is?"

The girl's face wore an odd expression as she said this, and Mrs. Belding, after a moment's reflection proceeded to the kitchen; not however with a very cheerful countenance, or ready will.

"A pretty affair—to be sure," thought she, as she gathered her snow-white wrapper around her the better to protect it from *imaginary* pollution—a caution quite unnecessary, as not a particle of dust was visible, and every thing appeared in the most perfect order.

"I should have supposed, from the appearance of the table, that Mr. Belding had a cook in his establishment;—pray, Letty, who has officiated hitherto in that capacity?"

Letty's gray eyes twinkled as she replied. "No other than meself, jist—with the oversight of the lady, ma'am."

"And do you pretend to call yourself a cook—and yet are unable to prepare a fowl for the table? who cooked the steaks this morning?"

"Indeed, then, it was jist meself. I can do plain cooking may be, as well as any one, and I could learn to stuff a turkey if the lady would be kind enough to teach me—but perhaps you do not know how the thing is done, yourself?"

Mrs. Belding colored to the temples as she re-

plied. "The kitchen is the servant's department;—if I have no cook I shall procure one immediately."

"Indeed, ma'am I shall be sorry if I cannot please you—I have lived in this family seven years come next Saint Patrick's day, and never has my mistress complained of me—the dear lady who is dead and gone, (pace be to her ashes) taught me all I know, and I'll be forever grateful, though she needs my service no more—" and Letty wiped away a tear as she turned away.

"Well Letty—what can you cook—you have surely lived long enough in the family to know something."

"Almost any plain food, ma'am, as cutlets, chops, 'am and *heggs*, bread and plain cakes—but my lady has never required me to stuff a fowl, or make puddings, and the rich cake she always preferred making herself. But, indeed ma'am I will do all with pleasure, if you will be so kind as to teach me."

SCENE III.

Mrs. Belding was now in a sad perplexity—she had never cooked a dinner in her life, but she had seen her mother stuff a turkey, she believed—bread was one ingredient—of that she was certain but—

"Letty—what is this milk, and these currants for?—not for the stuffing—surely?"

"Och! ma'am, no indeed! they are for the pudding. Miss Mabel, always makes a plumb pudding with a turkey; and so I took in the milk, this morning as usual—supposing you would like one too."

"Oh!—yes—but—"

"Oh! pardon me ma'am—I had like to have forgotten the keys. Miss Mabel, gave them to me this morning, and said I was to carry them directly to you—but indeed, it slipped my mind entirely. This is the key to the store-room—there you will find every thing you want—sugar *heggs* and spice—but may be you will jist show me how to make it—and another time you will not have the trouble?"

"Oh! no—I will attend to it myself, Letty."

"Then I will go and make ready the vegetables for indeed I am afraid the dinner will keep the master waiting, and that he may not like; as he has never been used to it."

Very well—go, if you have any thing to do."

Mrs. Belding found every thing in the store-room as Letty had said, but, "Oh, dear—if she only know how—if her mother was only near, to show her—or even Aunt Mabel, how foolish to suffer her to go away!" But there was no help for it. She would do her best and trust luck, for success.—The ingredients were all before her, and she must be an ignoramus, if she could not put them properly together. So with a stout heart she applied herself to her task—currants and spice, with milk and crackers, she knew were set one side for the pudding—so they would be easily put together; the pepper and salt, bread and *eggs* she thought would be all that was necessary for the stuffing. Thanks to an inventive genius, and a skillful hand, the formidable task was at length completed; and all without seeking assistance; at which her pride revolted, or even the betrayal of her ignorance to a servant.

Oh! what a weight was off her mind as she ascended to her dressing room; and a fine bloom

had the exercise and anxiety imparted to her cheek—indeed, her hands were as soft and white as before, and her eyes had lost none of their brightness, nor her complexion its bloom. Cooking was not *so very disagreeable*—after all!

The dinner hour arrived, and with it, the happy husband; accompanied by an old friend, and distant connection of his former wife; and proudly did he introduce his beautiful, and blooming bride to his friend, whom he had invited home with him as much, perhaps, to show his wife, as for the pleasure of his company.

Mr. Belding fancied that the dinner was long in making its appearance and several times did he consult his watch before he received the welcome summons. It came—at length, but the woe-begone countenance of Letty as she brought in the dishes induced Mrs. Belding to enquire if anything had occurred to distress her?

"Och! ma'am;—but the turkey is scorched outside—and I am sure it is raw within, for I was obliged to hurry it, *entirely*,—or it would never have been done in time for dinner—and Oh!—the pudding!—a queer thing it is, to be sure!—jist, for all the world like a pan of paste! and sure—the *evil one* must have been in the higgs, for it is as *heavy as sin*, and as *black as me shoe*?"

"Och!—and did not you *spill the spice* into it? ma'am."

Mrs. Belding had neither time nor inclination to hear more, the gentlemen were already in the dining-room, and it was now too late to remove, or make any exchange of dishes. The turkey was carved—but when Mr. Belding arrived at the stuffing, he suddenly paused, and looked enquiringly into the face of his wife, whose cheeks were already crimson with shame and mortification.—The first course being dispatched, or rather "laid upon the table" the pudding was served—and a rare dish it was—to be sure! All things—however disagreeable, must have an end, and so had the dinner; Mr. Belding looked as though he had barely "survived the shock," and his lady as though happiness was no longer to be expected—while dinners were so much in vogue, and as for poor Letty, she was distressed beyond all power of language to describe.

"Och! that ever she should be thought guilty of cooking such a dinner!—and a strange gentleman to dine with them too! Och!—that she ever came to America at all, at all! Thanks to the Holy Mother, that Miss Mabel, was away! a poor sinful *crater* she was, never to have learned to cook!—The young Missus was not used to it, poor thing, it was all her own fault—Och! ashamed she was entirely!"

The gentleman took his departure, and Mr. Belding with a countenance more "intelligent," than "agreeable" was about to repair to his store, when little Alonzo begged permission to accompany him. His father refused, saying he had found him too troublesome, in the morning, but that if he thought he could keep quiet, he might go to school with Emma."

"I cannot go to school, now that Aunt Mabel is away," replied Emma, "because there is no one to take care of Eva."

Mr. Belding glanced at his wife, and answered rather sharply, "that he hoped he was not expected to be both nursery-maid, and cook in the absence of his sister."

Mrs. Belding snatched up Eva—bade Emma and Alonzo "go to school directly" and betook herself to her chamber, mentally anathematizing men, dinners, and children in general, and *widowers*, and *step-children* in particular.

Days, as well as dinners, must have an end—but, alas! only to be succeeded by others, as disagreeable, perhaps, and *unsavory*. So thought Mrs. Belding, who had already shed a torrent of tears, accompanied by a score of regrets and a legion of horrors, either real or imaginary, all being augmented and magnified by her ignorance and inexperience, and terminating in the agreeable conviction that she was a *fool to marry a widower*.

Again a light tap at the door caused her to brush away the tears, so unbecoming to any one, and more especially to a young and blooming bride—and again the maid Letty, presented herself before her.

"I have taken the liberty to bring you the keys ma'am—which you must have forgotten, as I found them in the door of the store-room which was left unlocked."

"You need not have taken any trouble, Letty, it was of no consequence."

"But, indeed! ma'am—the dear lady that is dead and gone used to keep the storeroom locked—for the servants—"

"Pray let the *dead rest*, Letty, we have quite enough to do to please the *living*—" if it is necessary to keep every thing locked, take charge of the keys yourself."

"Thank you ma'am—I am obliged to you—but I would not like to take the responsibility. Things might be wasted, or I might forget to lock the door and the other servants be tempted to do wrong through my carelessness—and I should be accountable; a poor girl like myself, has nothing but her *character* to depend upon, ma'am."

"That girl is an artful hussy, or a fool—but it matters little which—if there is such a thing as a cook extant, I will have one before another moon wanes," muttered the lady as the maid disappeared.

The following morning, as the family was seated at the breakfast table, Alonzo broke the silence by enquiring what "step-mother" meant?

"It means—a—a—why do you ask? My son."

"Because, the scholars kept asking me, and Emma 'how we liked the step-mother?'—and Emma cried, and I could not tell them because I did not know—and then Frank Archer came up, and told them to stop teasing the poor children, for he guessed they would learn to hate the step-mother soon enough, without any of their help—and that if their father was fool enough to get a—a—Emma you tell it—I have forgotten."

Emma, did not seem disposed to help him out of his difficulty—and he concluded by saying, that "it was something about *catching a tartar*, and *nobody pitied him*," Mrs. Belding colored to the temples, and the tears started to her eyes—while her husband seemed to be very much occupied with the morning paper, which he always perused at the breakfast table.

For a few moments the silence continued, when again little Alonzo seemed to be suddenly inspired.

"I guess I know, what 'step-mother' means—"

Emma—it means that *somebody has stepped into a dead mother's place*—that's 'it—that's it, Emma."

"Hush! hush! children, I am reading."

At the expiration of six weeks Aunt Mabel returned, to the great delight of the children, and the evident satisfaction of her brother, though his lady was somewhat chary of her expressions of pleasure—not that her sister-in-law was unwelcome:—oh! no—but her shrewd glance, keen-observing eye; and more than all, perhaps—her apparent interest in all her brother's concerns, and her warm affection for his children, was, to say the least—any thing but agreeable.

"Do you know aunt Mabel?"—said Alonzo, looking up from a book of colored prints, equally new and beautiful, do you know that our good Letty is gone away?—and that a great ugly darkey woman lives here now?—she makes all the pies too, but papa wont taste of them though, 'cause he found an apple core in his piece. And there is a "nurse" too, to take care of Eva—but I wont stay with her, for she tells such great *stories*!—she says the "spooks" live in the dark—and if Eva cries for you, "nurse" tells her that you have "*flew*d away on a broomstick" and the "witches have carried you off," and if she does not "hush" they will take her too," and then Eva will sob, and cry till me or Emma goes to her. Oh! I don't like nurse at all!—but I'll be a man soon, and then I may stay with papa at the store;—will not that be nice, Aunty?"

Aunt Mabel was incapable of making any reply, but the cool enquiring glance of her full gray eye rested upon Mrs. Belding, and she was constrained to make an explanation, though not a question had been asked.

"You are doubtless surprised that I have seen fit to discharge a servant so long resident in the family—but I must confess that it is equally a matter of astonishment to me that she should have been so long retained. Letty could cook none but the plainest dishes—and the children, I am informed—have never, until now, had a regular "nurse."—Truly, for the first four weeks I was harrassed and perplexed on every side. The servants were both ignorant and impudent—the children were troublesome beyond endurance; and Mr. Belding was anything but agreeable."

"Verily, I foresaw this difficulty when I proposed a postponement of my visit. I hope thy new domestics fully answer thy expectations?"

"*Mine*—yes, for I can depend on Dinah to cook the meals without being obliged to spend half my mornings in the kitchen. And the children are less troublesome now they have some one to look after them—but Mr. Belding thinks the girl is not a suitable person to have the charge of them—(a mere whim) and he affects a horror of colored cooks and frequently dines out, but if *he* is suited—I am."

"Is it possible that thee dost prefer colored servants?"

"Oh! no, but what could I do? After trying four or five different white ones, within as many days, and finding them all inferior in many respects to the one I had just dismissed, I can assure you I was very glad to accept the services of Dinah.—Servants and children, are the plague of house-keeping, I sometimes wish I had lived an old maid."

"Verily, I believe it would have been wise in thee to have done so—at least, until thee had become a little better fitted for the duties of wedded life. But *wishing*, will not mend thy lot—so I would advise thee to be patient, in well doing—it is never too late to learn. Thee must not blame thy servants for being as ignorant as thyself. Take courage, and hope for happier days—thou wilt be sure to find *thine own children* less troublesome than thy husband's. But I am truly sorry that Letty is gone. She was an honest and faithful servant; evermodest in her pretensions, but always proving capable of performing whatever was required of her—(with proper instructions of course,) and she was moreover, remarkably neat, thee will not soon find her equal."

Mrs. Belding, really wished to be angry with the plain-spoken quakeress, but it was impossible to take offence, conscious as she was of her own deficiencies, and the truth of the lady's words.—Full well she knew that poor Letty would have done well, if she herself had not been incapable of giving necessary directions. And she was far from being blind to the glaring faults, of her new cook—true, she seldom ventured into the kitchen, as she was most sure to soil the purity of her white morning-dress, if she did so. And she was conscious too, of a sad waste of provisions—but, she had given the cook, *carte blanche*, in the culinary department, and she never troubled herself about the keys. So the least said upon that subject the better.

She sometimes thought that "nurse" was really "more plague than profit," for the more trouble the girl gave to the other servants the better it seemed to suit her. "Eva might carry sand in her apron, and spill coffee on the table cloth, if she liked—*she* did not have the washing to do," and she would teach her to make faces at the cook, and call her "nigger" too, if she chose."

Nurse was very fond of taking Eva to walk, particularly as she was permitted to choose her own course in her rambles with the child. There was a large garden, and beautiful grounds, adjoining the house—which were cooled by fountains and shade trees, but for some reason unknown, nurse always preferred walking in the street, and as Mrs. Belding made no objections, she frequently made "calls." Little Eva, and her loquacious nurse were sure to be welcome every where—particularly as the poor child had a *step-mother*.

Of course the kind neighbors never failed to enquire *very particularly* after the health, and welfare of their respected friend, and his *interesting* family. They all hoped the step-mother was kind to the children?—that she was a good house-keeper?—that she looked after the servants, as every lady ought to do?—and they *sincerely* hoped that no trouble would arise between the gentleman and his wife!—true, the man was very inconsiderate, to marry one so young—and it would be very strange if he did not have cause to repent of it. They had *heard*, that the lady knew nothing about cooking—they wondered if it was true?—ah! indeed! well, they thought something went wrong, for he was known to dine out, very frequently, of late. They wondered if aunt Mabel, and the new wife, were likely to agree pretty well? &c. &c.

If parents were fully aware of the interest *kind* friends take in their affairs—it is very probable,

that their children's airings would be more like angels visits—few and far between. True the fresh air may deepen the bloom upon the cheeks of their little ones, but the recollection of the conversation they are compelled to listen to, may bring a blush upon their brows; in after days. Scandal is a current coin, in this would-be-wise age and generation, and "Hearsay" is, as in days of yore a very interesting personage.

SCENE IV.

Aunt Mabel had said that Mrs. Belding would find *her own children* less troublesome than her husband's motherless "trio." And so she did;—who can doubt it? Ask a young mother if the sun ever shone upon a lovelier babe than the little smiling one that slumbers on her bosom? Ask her if the soul does not beam more brightly from those heaven-blue eyes, than from any belonging to that little group, now sporting upon the lawn? Her lips might refuse to answer, but the glance she bestows upon her own *princely gem*; so full of tenderness and pride, would be a truthful reply, and if *you* have chanced to behold *one more beautiful, or bright*—even though it be *your own*, it would be rash in you to assert it—the confidence and esteem of that young mother would, perchance be the forfeit.

The little Alice, was in truth a lovely child—and Mrs. Belding was a proud, if not a happy mother. Had there been no other children;—rivals in the father's love—all would have been well. He loved his little ones equally, we cannot doubt, but the mother would not believe it. True he sports with the bright little Alice, while pride and pleasure, are blended in his eyes—but, mark how tenderly his tearful eye will sometimes rest upon his motherless Eva, and with what gentleness he chides the mischievous Alonzo, whose thoughtless mirth threatens to disturb *her* infant's slumbers.

Months roll by, and years followed in their course, Mrs. Belding found, really, little to complain of, but still she was far from being happy. Not that perfect happiness is ever to be expected in this world of care, sin and death; but, innumerable petty annoyances, attendant upon her situation, which she could never have foreseen or prevented, destroyed her peace of mind and blasted every pleasure. If she had *real* troubles, she never lacked *imaginary* ones. She tried to do her best, and to please all parties, but her task was not easy, nor her burden light, and too often was she reminded of her friend Kate's prediction—too often dark clouds, gathered in the distance, and threatened to burst upon her head. Her husband was kind—but she could not endure to see him glance at the portrait of his former wife—and more than once did she wish it was burnt. If he alluded to the amiable qualities of his lost Eva, hoping that little Eva might imitate her virtues, she was ready to believe that he meant to reprove her for the want of them—if he patted his children she fancied he did so because they had no mother to caress them. If he made them presents, Eva's would probably be a book—and Emma's a musical instrument perhaps, while that of little Alice, would be a waxen doll, or a useless toy. Why should he make so much difference, if he loved them all alike?—true Alice was the youngest—but did that prove that she had the least sense?—

Eva and Alice, being so nearly of an age would doubtless have loved each other like *own sisters*,

had not the indiscreet remarks of others cause them to look upon each other as rivals.

"How sweet Alice's hair curls?" one would remark.

"Yes, and so did Eva's—when she was little; but it has got out of curl sadly since her mother died," would be the reply.

"What a graceful little fairy Eva is;—she was formed for a dancer, surely," is she fond of music?"

"Yes;—very, but Mrs. Belding thinks dancing a useless accomplishment, and Mr. Belding thinks there is too much time spent thrumming the piano, which might be better employed; so between them both the children have not been taught either music or dancing."

"Ah! indeed, they may alter their opinions, by the time Alice is old enough to take lessons."

"Should not wonder."

"Aunt Mabel, I want to speak with you," said Emma, one morning as that lady was walking in the garden.

"Well, my dear?"

"I wish you would persuade papa to let me go to boarding-school, with cousin Sarah—the Fall term commences in two weeks, and I should so much like to go."

"Thee had better ask him thyself, Emma—though I do not think he will be willing for thee to go from home—he does not approve of sending children to those fashionable boarding schools."

"I know it, aunt Mabel—for that reason I wish *you* to ask him, he will do just as you think best."

"But I *do not* think it best, my dear, we have as good schools near home, as we could find at a distance—thou art too *young* to go at present."

"Oh! but, Aunt Mabel if you only knew—"

"Knew what? Emma."

"I do not like to go to school here—yesterday my French exercise was very imperfect, and the teacher found fault with it—I did not try to excuse myself because I knew I might have learned it more perfectly, if I had really tried—but Julia Walker told the teacher that it "was not my fault, for my step-mother kept me so close at my sewing that I had no time to study at home," the teacher said no more, but you cannot think how much ashamed I felt."

"It is thy duty, Emma, to assist thy mother—and thee must not be unwilling to do so—" still thee must not neglect thy lessons."

"But aunt—she told me I must finish hemming the sheet, and I did, though Julia Walker came, for me to go for a walk—and when I told her that I had not learned my lesson yet—she asked me why I was not studying, then, instead of hemming that sheet?—and said I was a little goose or I would not work my fingers off, for a lazy step-mother."

I do not mind the sewing—aunt Mabel, but I do not like to hear so many remarks."

"Well, Emma, I will speak to thy father about it."

"Oh! thank you aunt—I will learn all I possibly can, if he will let me go, with cousin Sarah," but do not mention what I have said to—to *her*, because she would think I had been complaining of her."

"Certainly not, my dear."

Emma was sent to the boarding school, but not,

however, until some dark clouds had shaded the brow of her father, and some mysterious expressions fallen from his lips, which were not quite pleasing to Mrs. Belding."

"Tis a pity if my children cannot be made comfortable at their own home—but that I must be at the trouble and expense of sending them away. I should imagine that we employed sewing-girls enough to furnish a family of five, without tasking a child till it become the town's talk."

Mrs. Belding, understood just enough of it all to make her feel unhappy—and she asked for no farther explanation, as she knew from experience that it would not help to mend the matter—she was conscious of no wrong on her own part, and in that consciousness she sought alone for comfort.

"I shall be truly glad when the child is gone," thought she, for she is more troublesome to me than even Alonzo, for she is so wilful and perverse—that I dare not pretend to manage her—and she encourages the others to be as bad as herself, and she is so cross to my Alice that the poor child is really afraid of her—but aunt Mabel, can see none of her faults, and her father does not imagine that she has any.

Five years passed away—little Alice grew in beauty, as she increased in years—and was truly, all that a doting mother could desire. She proved an only child, and consequently an idol of her mother, who lavished upon her a store of pent up affection, that had long been repulsed by those on whom she would willingly have bestowed it.

She had once loved her husband fondly—but she saw and felt, that his heart was with his former wife, and her, motherless children.

He was never unkind—but, she did not believe he ever really loved her—he wanted some one to take care of his children—that was all—at least so she imagined, and perhaps she was right.

At length Emma returned from school—no longer a wilful child but a tall, handsome, and accomplished young lady. With pride and pleasure, did Mr. Belding gaze upon his eldest-born, and mark the improvement that had taken place in her manners and person, and he mentally thanked his sister for advising him to send her from home. The best private room in the house was furnished for the young lady—and nothing that money could procure was wanting to make it pleasant—with a valuable library—piano, and harpsichord—both of which she had learned to play, since she left home.

Contrary to the expectations of many of the kind friends who lived "right opposite," Emma treated her step-mother with the greatest respect—but that was all. In her sister, Eva found a true, and loving companion—and Alonzo, a confident, and an affectionate friend. But little Alice kept aloof—ever by her mother's side, loving, and beloved. More than once Mrs. Belding thought of the broken rose tree—the bands of grass—and the red, and white blossoms—"separate, though side by side."

Emma had been at home about six months, when one morning, as she was curling her bright locks over her white taper fingers—for want, perhaps, of other employment; her father thus addressed her,

"Well—Emma I suppose you consider your school-days over—and consequently, your education finished?"

"Well—papa—so do you, I imagine."

"By no means—my dear—but first answer one or two questions, and then I will inform you what you have still to learn. In the first place, Emma, do you ever intend to marry?"

The crimson deepened on her cheek, as she stammered a reply—"why—papa—no,—that is—"

"Then pray—what does Charley Granger call here so often for?—to see Aunt Mabel! eh, my girl." Well you can't answer, I perceive, so I will conclude what I have to say, and be off. It is simply this, and you may depend upon it too—that Charley Granger, or any other man shall never marry a daughter of mine, until she knows how to stuff a turkey, and make a pudding—but as you don't intend to marry, it is not so very essential—"

"Verily, brother," said aunt Mabel, "I find thee endowed with more sense than the world has given thee credit for."

Mrs. Belding colored to the temples, for she had not forgotten the first dinner. "I was not what I ought to have been—I am not what I might have been, but the fault is not all my own. My daughter, may live an old maid if she prefers, but she shall marry a widower—never. I have indeed found the position of step-mother to be a thankful office."

MISCELLANY.

INFANT TRAINING

WITH respect to moral education, one of the greatest errors into which men have fallen, is that of supposing the feelings originate in intellect—in other words, that knowledge will necessarily produce moral feelings and consequently, virtuous action. And hence, proceeding upon this error, they neglect entirely the moral improvement of their children, leaving them to form their own characters, when as they say, they are capable of thinking for themselves. But sad experience has taught us the fallacy of this doctrine. The truth is, the feelings, no less than the intellectual faculties, are subject to various modifications and infinite improvement. And it is a fact, attested by all observation, that man in all periods of life, from infancy to old age acts more from feeling than from intellect. Indeed, this cannot be too strongly insisted upon. Many fond parents, of pure hearts and heavenly conversation, who could not look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, and who, fancying that their children, like themselves, would eschew the very thought of evil, have stumbled over this very stone.

Every action has its source, and that source is the heart and the heart, as before said, is the seat of feeling. The feelings embrace the affections, passions and propensities. These constitute the great mainspring of human action; and, therefore, demand our greatest care in their cultivation and improvement. With respect to the improvement of the feelings, education is very defective.—Indeed, I do not know a subject involving the same amount of interest, respecting which men, generally speaking, are so little informed. The whole

routine of moral education, in nine families out of ten, consists simply in adopting certain general rules for the regulation of the outward conduct, and then a passionate correction for each violation of the rules, without ever thinking of reforming the feeling themselves; supposing that the evil disposition may be whipped to death, and that moral feelings—unsown and uncultivated—will naturally grow up in its stead. Thus, for instance, the parent lays down his rules for the government of his child, saying, this shalt thou do and this shalt thou not do, holding over no other inducement to obedience than simply—"I say it,"—aiming merely to govern, not to improve, his child. Under these circumstances it is natural that the child should disobey. Men never act without a motive, and it is contrary to nature to suppose that children will do so. However, the child is corrected, perhaps severely corrected, till he honestly repents his transgression. But why does he repent? Only because he is forced to do so; not because he loves obedience or regards virtue. I grant he is, for the time, subdued, but he is not reformed.—The evil disposition that incited the transgression, like the smothered fires of the volcano, is accumulating in his heart, ready to break forth so soon as the detested object, the rod, is removed. But the worst feature of all, and the most deplorable in its effects, is the manner of correction. I mean that angry, vindictive spirit which is manifested by parents when they correct their children. I firmly believe that some of the worst feelings that human nature is subject to, are engendered in the heart during the hours of correction. If we correct our children in an angry mood, they will naturally imbibe our feelings, and soon we shall see them taking vengeance in like manner, upon whatever may cross their inclination. If ideas are intuitive, feelings are no less so. The military array, the fife and the drum, sounding to the battle, fire our hearts with a warlike disposition, and we are ready to imbrue our hands in the blood of our brother, though we have had no quarrel with him. So, also, if we see one weep, our hearts sympathize, even though we had not desired it. Thus are we instinctively led to imitate others, both in their virtues and their vices. It is on this principle that religious ceremonies have a salutary effect upon the heart. This brings us to remark that the true mode of moral education consists, not so much in warring incessantly with the evil disposition, nor yet in precepts of morality, but example. We may use the rod till we are tired of whipping, and moralize till we are weary of talking, and yet we shall fail in our efforts unless we present our children with good examples for their imitation. In this way, the feeling individually will be exercised, and like the intellectual faculties, by acting, they will learn to act. So, also, by habit, they will learn to act in a certain way. By exercising the feelings to virtuous habits, morality will become congenial, and vice incompatible. This is what we call natural religion.—Casket.

LOVE'S SIMPLICITY.

A young woman alighted from a stage coach, when a piece of ribbon from her bonnet fell into the coach. "You have lost your bow behind," said a lady passenger. "Oh, no, I hav'nt, he's gone a fishing," innocently rejoined the damsel, proceeding on her way.

KINDNESS THE BEST PUNISHMENT.

A QUAKER of most exemplary character, was disturbed one night by footsteps around his dwelling, and he rose from his bed, and cautiously opened a back door to reconnoitre. Close by was an out house, and under it a cellar, near a window of which was a man busily engaged in receiving the contents of his pork barrel from another within the cellar. He stepped up to the cellar and received the peices of pork from the thief within, who, after a little while, asked his supposed accomplice in a whisper. "Shall we take it all?" The owner of the pork said softly. "Yes, take it all," and the thief industriously handed up the balance through the window, and then come up himself.

Imagine his consternation, when, instead of greating his companion in crime, he was confronted by the Quaker. Both were astonished, for the thief proved to be a near neighbor of whom none would have suspected such conduct. He plead for mercy, begged the old man not to expose him, spoke of the necessity of poverty, and promised faithfully never to steal again.

"If thou hadst asked me for meat," said the old man, "it would have been given thee. I pity thy poverty and thy weakness, and esteem thy family. Thou art forgiven."

The thief was greatly rejoiced, and was about to depart, when the old man said:—"Take the pork, neighbor."

"No, no," said the thief, "I don't want the pork."

Thy necessity was so great that it led thee to steal. One half of the pork thou must take with thee."

The thief insisited he could never eat a morsel of it. The thoughts of the crime would make it choke him. He begged the privilege of letting it alone. But the old man was incorrigible, and, furnishing the thief with a bag, had half the pork put therein, and laying it upon his back sent him home with it. He met his neighbor daily for many years afterward, and their families visited together, but the matter was kept a secret; and though in after time the circumstance was mentioned the name of the delinquent was never known. The punishment was severe and effectual.

It was probably his first, it was certainly his last attempt to steal.

Had the man been arraigned before a court of justice, and imprisoned for the petty theft, how different might have been the result. His family disgraced, their peace destroyed, the man's character ruined, and his spirits broken. Revenge, not penitence, would have swayd his heart, the scorn of the world would have blackened his future, and in all probability he would have entered into a course of crime at which, when the first offence was committed, his soul would have shuddered.—And what would the owner of the pork have gained? Absolutely nothing. Kindness was the best punishment, for it saved while it punished.

The following illustration in point is going the rounds of the newspapers:

Isaac Hopper, who was a member of the Friends' Society in Philadelphia, once heard a colored man, a painter, by the name of Cain, a hardened wretch, using profane language, and the most horrid oaths, while engaged in a street fight; and supposing persuasion would have no effect upon him, he

took him before a magistrate, who fined him for blasphemy. Twenty years after, Isaac met Cain, while travelling, and observed that his appearance was very much changed; that his dress was tattered, and his countenance care worn. This touched the friend's heart, and he stepped up and shook hands with him, and spoke kindly to the forlorn being. At first Cain did not recognize him, when the Quaker said to him, "Dost thou not remember me, and how I fined thee for swearing?"

"Yes, indeed, I do," said the colored man.

"Well, did it do thee any good?"

"No," said he, very gruffly, "not a bit, it only made me mad to have my money taken from me."

Hopper then invited Cain to reckon up the interest on the fine, and said at the same time, "I meant it for thy good Cain, and I am sorry that I did thee any harm."

Cain's countenance changed—the tears rolled down his cheeks—he took the money with many thanks—became a quiet man—and was never afterwards heard to use an oath,

Such was the happy result of kindness. It did what punishment could not do.

THE FORTUNE-TELLER'S ALMANAC.

To dream of a millstone about your neck is a sign of what you may expect if you marry an extravagant wife.

When a house-keeper dreams of bell ringing, and wakes with the sound of it in her ears it generally indicates that there is somebody at the door—most probably a "gent," who has been stopping at the cider-cellars.

It is very lucky to dream that you pay for a thing twice over; since, afterwards you will probably take care to have all your bills receipted.

To dream that you are a judge is a sign that you will remain a bachelor.

To dream of bagpipes is an agreeable omen.—On the principle that dreams are to be interpreted by contraries, you may expect to hear music.

To dream of a bear foretokens mischief, which your vision shows you is a bruin.

If you dream of beer, it is a sign that you may expect "pot-luck."

To dream of a boar forbodes a railway call.

To dream of cab, foreshows a journey and a dispute at the end of it; which will probably have some reference to the fare.

To dream of ice is a favorable omen of a lady, provided she relates her dream to an agreeable young man on passing a pastry-cook's shop on a hot day.

If you dream of a ducking, it may be presumed that you will escape one, by having the prudence not to venture forth without your umbrella.

To see apples in a dream betokens a wedding because where you find apples you may reasonably expect pairs.

QUESTION RESPECTFULLY PUT TO THE OLDEST INHABITANT.

BY AMERICAN JOE MILLER.

Did you ever know a newspaper started that was'n't a capital medium for advertising?

Did you ever know a bottle of Port which hadn't been six years in the bottle?

Did you ever know a baby that was not the quietest little thing in the world?

Did you ever know a young lady without a scrap-book?

Did you ever know an Irish servant-girl without a cousin?

Did you ever know a railroad accident in which there was any blame attached to anybody?

Did you ever know a disinterested politician?

Did you ever see any California Gold?

Did you ever know an actor who couldn't act Macbeth.

EXTENSIVELY LAID OUT.

A PIAIN old father had a son much given to the vanities of the toilet, and on coming home in a new fashioned great coat, with something less than a score of capes, was asked what kind of *thatching* he had got on his sholders.

"Capes—only capes, father."

"So, so!" said the old man, passing his hand over them. "Cape Hatteras, Cape Henlopen, I suppose; and here," clapping his hand on his son's head, "is the Light House."

An editor down east, who served four days on a jury, says he's so full of law, that it is hard for him to keep from cheating somebody.

The hands on Jim's clock are both hour hands; because, he says, as we've bought and paid for them, they are *our* hands.

WHY is a stick of molasses candy like a bottle of cologne? Because they are both bought for a *s-cent*.

CAPITAL Punishment, as the boy said when the school mistress seated him with the girls.

NONSENSE is that kind of sense which no sense can understand.

Letters Containing Remittances,

Received at this Office ending Wednesday last, deducting the amount of postage paid.

Mrs. M. E. F. Bethlehem, Conn. \$1.00; T. G. P. Eddyville, N. Y. \$1.00; C. H. P. Chatham, N. Y. \$0.50; G. W. R. Franklin, N. Y. \$1.00; W. L. Shushan, N. Y. \$3.00; W. H. R. Westford, N. Y. \$0.50.

MARRIAGES.

In this city, on the 20th ult. at the Methodist Church, by Rev. G. Coles, Mr. Harrison C. Humphrey to Miss Sarah C. Hevener, all of this city.

On the 25th ult. by the Rev. G. Collins, Capt. John T. Haviland to Miss Delia White.

At Poughkeepsie, on the 25th ult. by the Rev. Polhemus Van Wyck, Mr. John Hallenbeck, of Greenport, Col. Co. to Miss Frances Churchill, of the former place.

On the 14th ult. by the Rev. J. A. Wilson, Rector of St. Luke's Church, the Hon. O. Houston Van Cleve to Anne, daughter of David McKinstry, Esq. all of Ypsilanti.

At Saugerties, on the 15th ult. by Rev. C. Van Santvoord, Ira A. Shattuck, of New-York, to Rachel Baker, of Hudson.

At Ghent, on the 19th ult. at the Parsonage House, by the Rev. J. C. Vandervoort, Mr. James A. Sharp to Miss Levantia Eddy, both of Valatie.

At New Lebanon Springs, on the 14th ult. by the Rev. Mr. Kendall, Mr. Martin C. Dedrick to Miss Elizabeth J. Fowler, both of Kinderhook.

DEATHS.

In this city, on the 24th ult. Col. William A. Dean, in the 54th year of his age.

On the 29th ult. Joseph McMahan, in the 51 year of his age.

On the 21st ult. at the residence of her father, Eliza Beckman, youngest daughter of John Crawford, Esq. aged 90 years.

At Kinderhook, on the 13th ult. Silas Wright, son of Silas Barton, aged 17th months.

At Ghent, on the 13th ult. John Stewart Van Hoesen, aged 2 years, 2 months and 9 days, the only child of William and Jane Van Hoesen.

At Cincinnati, on the 21st ult. Mrs. Emily Shimer of Cholera, aged 38 years, daughter of Henry Harder of this city.

At Clermont, on the 4th ult. at her son-in-law's William H. Smith, Mrs. Mary Miller, in the 66th year of her age.



POETRY.

From the Boston Path Finders

THE OLD PRINTER.

Something of a fancy sketch, but too near the truth to make much fun of.

I see him at his case,
With his anxious, cheerless face
Worn and brown :
And the types' unceasing click,
As they drop within his stick,
Seems of Life's old clock the tick,
Running down.

Years, years away have flown,
And the printer long I've known,

Boy and man;
Time was when step elate
Distinguished his gait,
And his form was tall and straight,
We now scan.

You could see him every day,
As he passed along the way
To his toil ;

He labored might and main,
A living scant to gain,
And some interest small attain
In the soil.

And hope was high at first,
And the golden chest he nursed,
Till he found
That hope was but a glare
In a cold and frosty air,
And the promise, pictured fair,
Barren ground.

He ne'er was reckoned bad,
But I've seen him smile right glad
At "leaded" woes,
While a corresponding frown
Would spread his features round
Where virtue's praise did sound,
If 'twere "close."

Long years he's labored on,
The morning hues are gone
From his sky ;
For others are his hours,
For others are his powers,
And his days, like passing showers,
Flitting by.

You can see him, night by night,
By the lamp's dull, dreary light,
Standing there,
With cobweb curtains spread
In festoons o'er his head,
That sooty showers shed
In his hair.

And when the waning moon
Proclaims of night the noon,
If you roam,

You may see him, weak and frail,
As his weary steps do fail,
In motion like the snail,
Wending home.

His form by years is bent,
To his hair a tinge is lent
Sadly grey ;
And his teeth are sore decayed,
And his eyes their trust betrayed—
Great havoc Time has made
With his clay.

But soon will come the day,
When his form will pass away
From your view,
And the spot shall know no more
The sorrows that he bore,
Nor the disappointments sore
That he knew.

SYMPATHY.

BY MARION H. RAND.

HIDE not thy secret grief
In the dark chambers of the soul,
Where sombre thoughts and fancies roll,
Bringing thee no relief.

Gloomy and cold the spirit grows,
While brooding over fancied woes:
The lightest care, while yet concealed,
Lies like a mountain on the breast ;
The heaviest grief, if once revealed,
Is lulled by sympathy to rest.

Relieve thy bursting heart,
And pour into some loving ear
Each bitter thought, each chilling fear ;
How soon will all depart !

And words of love, like healing balm,
Will gently soothe and sweetly calm,
Till reason's almost fading ray,
Resumes its firm and wonted way,
And though the burden be not less,
Thou wilt not still be comfortless.

Haat thou no human friend,
To whom in hours like these to turn ;
When thine o'erburdened soul will yearn
Its bitterness to end ?

Oh, still despair not—there is One
To whom and hearts have often gone ;
Though rich the gifts for which they pray,
None ever came unblest away ;
Then, though all earthly ties be riven,
Smile, for thou hast a friend in Heaven !

ALL'S FOR THE BEST.

ALL'S for the best : the sanguine and cheerful,
Troubles and sorrows are friends in disguise ;
Nothing but folly goes faithless and fearful—
Courage forever is happy and wise ;
All's for the best—if a man could but know it ;
Providence wishes us all to be blest ;
This is no dream of the pundit or poet,
Heaven is gracious, and all's for the best.

All's for the best : set this on your standard,
Soldier of sadness or pilgrim of love,
Who to the shores of despair may have wandered,
A wayfaring swallow, or heart-stricken dove ;
All's for the best ! be a man, but confiding,
Providence tenderly governs the rest,
And the frail bark of His creatures is guiding,
Wisely and warily, all's for the best.

All's for the best ! then fling away terrors,
Meet all your fears and foes in the van,
And in the midst of your dangers or errors,
Trust like a child while you strive like a man ;
All's for the best ! unbiassed, unbounded,
Providence reigns from the east to the west ;
And by both wisdom and mercy surrounded,
Hope and be happy, for, ALL'S FOR THE BEST !

THE BRUISED HEART.

How softly on the bruised heart
A word of kindness falls,
And to the dry and parched soul
The moistening tear-drop calls.
O, if they knew, who walk the earth
'Mid sorrow, grief and pain,
The power a word of kindness hath,
'Twere Paradise again.

The weakest and the poorest may
This simple pittance give,
And bid delight to withered hearts,
Return again and live ;
O, what is life, if love be lost ?
If man's unkind to man—
Or what is heaven that waits beyond
This brief and mortal span ?
As stars upon the tranquil sea
In mimic glory shine,
So words of kindness in the heart
Reflect their source divine ;
O, then be kind, whoe'er thou art
That breathe'st mortal breath,
And it shall brighten all thy life,
And sweeten even death.

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